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WRL NEWS

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Demonstrate Against Invasion of Laos

Photo by Bill Andrews

On February 10, following the invasion of Laos, over 3000 persons jammed Times Square in the biggest New York anti-war demonstration since the October 1969 Moratorium. Record turnouts were reported also in Boston and Berkeley. Demonstrations took place that day in 30 cities across the country.

In London, the War Resisters International issued a statement urging intensification of resistance propaganda among U.S. soldiers. "Already, many thousands of GIs are organized in the American Servicemen's Union," the statement said. "WRI sections and groups may be able to help by offering facilities to such resistance groups and help set them up where they do not yet exist."

A weekend of co-ordinated activity at American bases was suggested, with the use of leaflets and loudspeakers at perimeter fences for all-day broadcasts to the servicemen.

PEACE BUS BACK ON ROAD

The WRL Peace Bus is rolling again—and in time to mobilize for the Spring Offensive. The new crew includes Linda Klipper, Fred Ingram and Marc Nevas of the Berkeley Peace Brigade.

During the spring, the bus will head west via Kent, Ann Arbor, Madison, Dubuque, Denver, Albuquerque, Phoenix and Los Angeles. Anybody along this route who would like the bus to stop in their community, should contact WRL.

UNITE ON MASS RALLY DATE

In a recent mailing, we said the date of the mass rally in Washington was May 2. That was the date chosen by the *Peoples Coalition for Peace and Justice*, with which the WRL cooperates. Another coalition, politically more moderate, the *National Peace Action Coalition*, called for a mass rally on April 24. The difference between the coalitions is simple: NPAC is limited to only one issue, Vietnam, and only one tactic, mass legal rallies. The *Peoples Coalition* is trying to link peace with justice, foreign militarism with domestic problems. And it favors a range of action from political to mass rallies to civil disobedience.

One group or the other had to give way in order to permit unity around a single date. The *Peoples Coalition* was the group that risked "losing face" in order to bring unity within the movement around a *single date— April 24*. May 2 is *not* a mass national rally, but a rally for those remaining in Washington for sustained civil disobedience. April 24 *is* the date for united action arounnd a peaceful, legal rally in Washington and San Francisco.

"Quebec/Canada—October Events"

Special issue of OUR GENERATION, pacifist-oriented Canadian quarterly, on the totalitarian-style repression which followed the two kidnappings by separatist extremists $1.50

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ROODENKO TOUR WINDUP

(For those who want to contact and book him)

MARCH 28-APR. 2 — Mandy Carter, WRL West, 833 Haight St., San Francisco, Calif.

APR. 5-6—Sandy Kosakoff, 3431 NW Thurman, Portland, Ore.

APR. 10-14—Barry Laing, Box 9013 Postal Station K, Vancouver 6, B.C., Canada

APR. 15-17—Dave Gutknecht, 2525 15th Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn.

APR. 18-19—Bill Munger, 1012 N. 3rd St. (Rm. 317), Milwaukee, Wisc.

APR. 20-21—John Bache, AFSC, 407 St. Dearborn, Chicago, Ill.

APR. 22-25—Marion Carson, 2660 3rd Ave., Marion, Iowa

APR. 26-May 1—Iris Brooks, 409 Edgewood, Columbia, Mo.

AFTER MAY 1—Larry Gara, 21 Faculty Place, Wilmington, Ohio and John Talayaco, 325 E. Cross St., Ypsilanti, Mich.

SAILOR WHO WILLED INSURANCE TO WRL WINS ACQUITTAL

Roger Priest, the Navy apprentice and underground editor who willed his service-connected life insurance to WRL and urged others to do likewise, has won a complete acquittal on disloyalty charges. The Navy announced on February 12 that its court of military review had reversed Priest's courtmartial conviction for promoting disloyalty through his underground newsletter. The reversal was based on a technical error of the trial judge.

Priest originally had been accused of urging sedition and desertion but that charge was dismissed. The appeals court's reversal of the lesser charge means that Priest is now eligible for an honorable discharge.

A MEMO ON "DEAR SIR"

by Wendy Schwartz

The sexual revolution as—in a small but nevertheless significant way—finally touched the League. For over a year now, the all-male bastion of Lafayette Street has been integrated. So when you write to us, it's very possible that you'll be answered by any one of three, able-bodied, knowledgeable women.

In the last months I've written to countless people who addressed letters to us "Gentlemen" or "Sir," suggesting that they find some alternative neuter-gender salutation. In addition to answering the questions that were the purpose for the letters, I've taken it upon myself, in the true crusading spirit of the League, to try to awaken your consciousness to the idea that women quite frequently are in decision-making positions (or at least, letter-answering positions) in revolutionary organizations. And now that I've said my bit for this issue, I'll go back to stuffing envelopes.

SAM COLEMAN

Sam Coleman, WRL Vice-Chairman, died of a heart attack on January 22 at the age of 59. He had served on the executive committee for the past decade.

In his statement on candidacy for the current election, he wrote: "I see two pressing duties for radical pacifists: first, to invent fresh forms of nonviolent civil disobedience that will confront Americans with their involvement in our government's unjust and violent policies and to organize such actions. Second, to find how to maintain close though critical friendships with movements against war, racism, poverty and injustice—even while we may publicly condemn them for their methods and outlook—to learn how to struggle alongside them for goals we clearly share."

He added: "My son returned his draft card in an action of resistance to the war." He is survived by his wife, Edna, a son and daughter, a brother and a sister."

Sam came to the WRL following his disillusionment with the Communist Party. He had done a year in jail under the Smith Act as a consequence of the McCarthy era prosecutions. In earlier years he had been an organizer for the bakery and typographical workers unions.

At the time of his death, he was a philosophy professor at Columbia University. An obit in the Columbia *Daily Spectator* February 4 quoted Dean Hovde: "Sam Coleman was one of the most remarkable people I have ever known. I think the key word to characterize him would be pure generosity."

David McReynolds of WRL was one of the speakers who eulogized him at a memorial service which was attended by some 300 persons.

WRL AWARD WINNER GETS WEST POINT DISCHARGE

Cornelius Cooper, Jr., who came to the 1970 WRL dinner to personally accept the twelfth annual peace award, has become the first West Point graduate to win an honorable discharge as a conscientious objector.

The discharge went into effect February 10 with what his ACLU attorneys Marvin Karpatkin and Michael Pollet described as "spectacular speed." Only a month previous, Major General George Blanchard reversed the negative recommendation of a hearing officer and asserted that Cooper "is quite sincere and is of no benefit to this division of the Army as a result of the beliefs he holds."

Cooper detailed those beliefs at a press conference February 13 in which he said the U.S. should adopt pacifism and disarmament as national policies. He views it as absurd to try members of the armed forces for individual acts of atrocity in Vietnam "since war itself is a crime." In his discharge application, he pointed out that as a black man "I am caused to be more than unusually sensitive to the fact of violence in life and the effect of violence on men's lives." He was one of 8 blacks in the '69 West Point graduating class.

Last year's WRL peace award went to resisters within the military.

ENROLLMENT BLANK

Send to War Resisters League
339 Lafayette Street, N. Y., N.Y. 10012

WAR IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY. I THEREFORE AM DETERMINED NOT TO SUPPORT ANY KIND OF WAR, INTERNATIONAL OR CIVIL, AND TO STRIVE FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL THE CAUSES OF WAR

signature

address

city

state *zip code*

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